

Reaching Out to Urban Indians: Best Practices in Communications and Partnerships

Speaker Biographies



Wilbur Woodis, M.A.

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Wilbur Woodis, Dine' (Navajo) Mud Clan (Hasht[ishnii) and born for the Zuni Clan (Naasht'ezhi Dine'é), was born and raised in Shiprock, New Mexico, located in northwest New Mexico in the four corners area on the Navajo Reservation. He earned an M.A. degree in counseling and family studies at the University of New Mexico, where he received an Outstanding Achievement Award from the College of Education.

Mr. Woodis joined the Office of Minority Health on April 28, 2008. Prior to that, he worked in the Office of Clinical and Preventive Services within the Division of Behavioral Health of the Indian Health Service Headquarters East. He has many roles at this national office located just outside the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. He currently assists with the collaboration, coordination, and management of health disparity initiatives focusing on the Native American population. He also has been a Project Officer or active consultant on many national initiatives covering such topics as domestic violence, suicide, wellness, Head Start, men, gathering of Native Americans, postcolonial psychology, fetal alcohol syndrome, treatment drug courts, community health, and currently American Indian/Alaska Native health disparities.

Mr. Woodis has an extensive background in providing direct clinical services among this Nation's indigenous tribal people. One of his goals is to learn what he can at the national level and return to his first love, which is providing counseling and help services with the local grassroots native healers and/or practitioners. He would like to someday write about interventions that involve the use of native healers in combating behavioral health, social illnesses, and community empowerment.

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John T. Burklow is the associate director for communications and public liaison at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the primary medical research agency in the Federal Government. The NIH's annual budget is more than \$30 billion, which supports a large research facility in Bethesda, Maryland, NIH laboratories in Frederick, Baltimore, North Carolina, and Montana, and more than 325,000 researchers throughout the United States and around the world. NIH receives several thousand press inquiries a year and is often in the news. Mr. Burklow serves as the chief advisor to the NIH director, principal deputy director, and senior staff on communications and public liaison issues. He also serves as the NIH spokesman for the agency (on nonscience issues). Mr. Burklow is the director of the NIH Office of Communications and Public Liaison, overseeing news media (and new media), editorial operations, online communications, special projects, the NIH visitor center functions, the NIH Freedom of Information Act Office, and is also the acting director of the NIH Office of Community Liaison.

Mr. Burklow and his staff work closely with each of NIH's 27 Institutes and Centers communications offices and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Public Affairs.

Between October 1999 and April 2002, he was the deputy associate director for communications, NIH. From 1986 until 1999, Mr. Burklow worked in the Office of Cancer Communications, National Cancer Institute (NCI), where he held a variety of positions, including deputy director of that office. While at NCI, he established a partnership initiative, launched a cancer education program for older Americans, and created a cancer survivorship program.

Mr. Burklow has published a number of news articles on a range of topics, including communicating to older Americans, age bias in health care treatment, cancer survivors, cancer prevention among African Americans, and older women and mammograms. He was a contributing editor to *Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide*, also known as the "Pink Book," a guide widely used throughout communications offices, health departments, and universities around the world.

Mr. Burklow holds a bachelor's degree in communications from Southern Illinois University and a master's degree in public health education from the University of North Carolina-Greensboro. He is originally from Tinley Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.



D'Shane Barnett

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D'Shane Barnett is a member of the Prairie Chicken clan of the Mandan tribe. He is Mandan and Arikara from the Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold, North Dakota—also known as the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation. Mr. Barnett currently serves as the executive director of the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH). NCUIH is a membership organization that advocates for 33 Urban Indian Health Programs, 2 Oklahoma Urban Programs, and 5 Urban Residential Treatment Centers located throughout the United States. Prior to his position at NCUIH, Mr. Barnett served as the director of planning and policy for the Native American Health Center in Oakland, California. Mr. Barnett has also worked for the Inter-Tribal Council of California (Sacramento, CA) and the Native American Youth Association (Portland, OR).

Jami Bartgis, Ph.D.

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Jami Bartgis completed her Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Oklahoma State University and APA predoctoral internship at the University of South Florida, Florida Mental Health Institute, with a focus on mental health policy. She is an enrolled citizen of the Cherokee Nation in Oklahoma and has spent over 10 years providing health services and support to both tribal and urban Indian individuals and communities. Dr. Bartgis is currently the director of technical assistance and research at the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH). In this role, she provides technical assistance and research support to urban Indian health programs across the United States to both improve quality of care and expand the capacity to provide health services to American Indian and Alaska Native people living in cities. Prior to joining NCUIH, Dr. Bartgis provided direct patient care at the Indian Health Care Resource Center of Tulsa. In addition to her clinical practice in Tulsa, she coordinated the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Circles of Care grant with the Tulsa urban Indian community, co-chaired the Tribal/State Relations Workgroup through the Oklahoma Governor's Mental Health Transformation Advisory Board, and had the honor of working with countless Indian youth and families in the development and advocacy of mental health service systems to directly affect the health of the patients she served.



Ralph Forquera, M.P.H.

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Ralph Forquera is executive director for the Seattle Indian Health Board (SIHB) and director of the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI). A member of the Juaneño Band of California Mission Indians, Mr. Forquera is a recognized authority on urban Indian health, has authored articles and book chapters on the subject, testified numerous times before the Congress on urban Indian concerns, and served as the executive producer and panelist on an award-winning video documentary on the creation of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (P.L. 94-437) that codified the urban Indian health program for the Nation. Mr. Forquera holds a master in public health degree from California State University, Northridge. He has a faculty appointment as an associate clinical professor with the University of Washington, School of Public Health. He lectures extensively on urban Indian health throughout the Nation. In creating the UIHI in 2000, Mr. Forquera recognized the importance of scientific study as the foundation for social and health policy planning and advocacy. His work has brought to light the shortcomings of current data collection efforts and helped expand discussion around the inclusion of data on small and mostly invisible populations like urban Indians with government entities responsible for gathering and analyzing information on the health of the Nation. Mr. Forquera has worked in the field of urban Indian health for 30 years. His efforts have helped make urban Indians a more visible population and documented the enormous health and social needs within this population.

SIHB: Founded in 1970, SIHB is a nonprofit community health center that targets urban American Indians and Alaska Natives in the greater Seattle, Washington, region. Offering a broad array of primary health care and community health services, the agency has been nationally accredited since 1986. A unique characteristic of SIHB is management of the only accredited family medicine residency training program with a focus on American Indians. In addition, it operates Thunderbird Treatment Center, a residential treatment facility for substance abuse. SIHB is partially funded by the Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Primary Health Care as well as recognized as a Federally Qualified Health Center for Medicare, Medicaid, and SCHIP.

UIHI: Created in 2000, UIHI is a division of SIHB. It serves as a focal point for studies and advocates for the inclusion of urban Indians in local, state, regional, and national health information collection and analysis. One of 12 tribal epidemiology centers, UIHI has a national focus working in collaboration with the 34 urban Indian health organizations that contract with the Indian Health Service and other urban metropolitan areas with sizeable urban Indian populations as recognized in the 2010 census. The Institute has published a number of peer-reviewed articles, reports, fact sheets, and other forms of communication to reach a broad array of audiences.



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Kristen Nadeau completed her M.D. at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. She did her pediatrics residency at the Oregon Health Sciences Center and her pediatric endocrinology fellowship at the University of Colorado Denver. Her American Indian heritage (Prairie Band Potawatomi and Ottawa), and the disproportionate toll type 2 diabetes takes on American Indian youth, led her to pursue pediatric endocrinology.

Dr. Nadeau currently studies the long-term complications of pediatric-onset diabetes, as well as the relationships between diabetes and other conditions such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, and periodontal disease. She is an investigator on two studies that include pediatric American Indian cohorts—the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases-funded TODAY clinical trial and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded SEARCH study. The TODAY trial compares two alternative diabetes drugs to a combined exercise and diet intervention in youth. The SEARCH study aims to identify the number of children and youth under age 20 who have diabetes; study how type 1 diabetes and type 2 diabetes differ, including how they differ by age and race/ethnicity; investigate the different types of treatment that youth receive; and learn more about the complications of diabetes and how diabetes affects the everyday lives of this population. As part of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research-funded Center for Native Oral Health Research in Colorado, Dr. Nadeau is also investigating periodontal health in urban Indian youth with type 2 diabetes and obesity.

Dr. Nadeau is the recipient of a number of NIH grants; she has also received research and career development funding from the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation and the American Diabetes Association.